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THEODOSIUS.

OR A

SOLEMN ADMONITION

TO

Proteſtant Diſſenters.

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THEODOSIUS:

OR A

Solemn Admonition

TO

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,

ON THE

PROPOSED REPEAL

OF THE

TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS.

In which are considered the political and religious Characters of

Dr. P********,
Dr. PRICE,
Mr. FOX,
Judge *****,
Mr. SHERIDAN,
Mr. B****,
Mr. SAWBRIDGE,
Mrs. F**********, &c.

Τϐτο δε γινωϑκε, οτι εν εχαταις ημεραις εμϛησυνλαι καιροι χαλεποι.

Second Epiſ. Timothy, Chap. iii. Verſe 1.

Ἀλλ' ϐ' προκοψϐσιν επι πλιον η γαρ ανοια αυταυν εκδηλος εϛαι πασιν,

Ibid. Verſe 9.

LONDON;

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PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THEODOSIUS.

TO THE

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS

OF

ENGLAND.

IN an age, ſo ſtudious of novelty and enterprize, I do not flatter myſelf that the ſerious admonitions of fourſcore years and ten will be honoured with *univerſal* attention, but my heart aſſures me, that the truly pious, and well principled Proteſtants will meditate on theſe things, and not raſhly aſſent to meaſures, that obviouſly endanger the church of Chriſt, and the exiſtence

of that freedom for which our brave and worthy anceſtors ſacrificed property and life.

Abſtracted from the world, I have leiſure to contemplate the various ſcenes of human life, and to aſcertain the views of popular and diſtinguiſhed men; and I have now the honor, my Friends and Brethren, to lay before you the reſult of my obſervations, and I pray that the ſpirit of the Moſt High God may enlighten our minds, and lead us into all truth.

I truſt I have no where violated the laws of Charity and Candour, when ſpeaking of thoſe who are led aſtray by a vain imagination, or influenced by a rooted enmity to Chriſt. It it my privilege, my duty to oppoſe *error*, but the *perſons* of men I commit to the tender mercies of God.

If there be any thing in my ſtile of writing, which, in this enlightened age, appears antiquated and uncouth, I hope my years will be my apology.

THE OBJECT OF THIS ESSAY.

I do not bluſh to own that I am an advocate for the *Bible*.

I believe it's *doctrines* are in danger of corruption from *popery*.

And it's very *exiſtence* in danger of being ſubverted by *infidelity* and *ſcepticiſm*.

I am

I am diſpoſed to credit PAUL, the Apoſtle of JESUS CHRIST, in preference to JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, the Apoſtle of Scepticiſm and Infidelity. The Doctor is a learned man, I admit, and as ſuch I honour him. But it ought not to weaken our faith in the Chriſtian Religion, becauſe a man of education oppoſes its ſacred myſteries. *Not many of the Noble or the Wiſe are called to the knowledge of divine truth.* The Croſs was always a *ſtumbling-block to the Jews, and fooliſhneſs to the Greek.* Dr. Prieſtley is only a *modern* inſtance of an *antient* obſervation. If no man of letters in Europe gave credit to the Bible, it's hiſtory and its doctrines would ſtill reſt on their own eternal foundation.

But we have ſeen, and the conſideration makes the blood thrill with rapture through my aged veins, we have ſeen *Philoſophers* bow down to the internal evidence of the Bible——Philoſophers, of whom antient Greece might be juſtly proud —and compared with whom, a modern *experimentaliſt* is weakneſs and vanity. NEWTON, whoſe ſublime genius diſplayed the glories of the Deity, in the magnitude and economy of the celeſtial bodies, was a *Believer*. LOCKE, the ſupreme defender of *Common Senſe*, whoſe ſolid underſtanding fathomed the profoundeſt receſſes of intellect, was a *Believer*.

It were an inſult to the memory of theſe illuſtrious philoſophers to compare them with the ſuperficial advocates of gloomy Scepticiſm, or impious Infidelity.

THE PLAN PURSUED IN THIS ESSAY.

IT being my intention to oppoſe the Repeal of the Teſt and Corporation Acts, I begin with a brief ſketch of the *moral*, *political*, and *religious* characters of the principal friends of this ill-adviſed and pernicious project.

Secondly, I demonſtrate the fatal conſequences of the meaſure, if carried into effect.

Thirdly, I addreſs Proteſtant Diſſenters according to their ſeveral ſects or perſuaſion, and then conclude, with an humble Appeal to my Lords the Biſhops, and to His Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales.

DR. PRIESTLEY.

DR. PRIESTLEY.

THE following Anecdote of SILAS DEANE, the American, will beſt exemplify my ideas of Dr. PRIESTLEY's *Chriſtianity*, and be—I hope—a ſufficient warning to my Brethren the Diſſenters, not to lend their aid to a man, who publicly avows a deſign to annihilate the tranſmitted faith of our anceſtors, and whoſe principles have a direct tendency to eſtabliſh *Atheiſm* and *Anarchy*. I ſolemnly affirm the Narrative to be a fact, as I hope for the divine protection and ſupport in time and eternity.

The NARRATIVE.

I knew Mr. DEANE, from his early infancy. He was pleaſed to conſider me as a friend, and to repoſe an unbounded confidence in my integrity. He was naturally of a bold, enterpriſing ſpirit, and contributed more to the Revolution in America, than any man that can be named. His addreſs at Verſailles, urged that inſidious and temporizing Court to an immediate declaration of its intentions. The fact is curious, and in a degree important, as it ſerves to demonſtrate the wretched intelligence which our Ambaſſador tranſmitted to Great Britain. I received the detail from his own lips.

Dr. FRANK-

Dr. FRANKLIN and others, were diſpatched on an embaſſy to France. To dupe the Court of Great Britain, they were refuſed a public audience of the King and his Miniſter. But notwithſtanding the boaſted vigilance of Lord STORMONT, notwithſtanding the immenſe ſums paid by this country for Secret Service Money, a conſtant intercourſe was carried on with SARTINE, through the medium of his Secretary. Theſe negotiations, however, appearing too dilatory and evaſive to Mr. Deane, he ſent a letter to SARTINE, ſolemnly proteſting, that he would propoſe terms of accommodation to England, if the declaration of immediate ſupport were not ſigned by France in eight and forty hours. This bold and irregular proceeding was entirely unknown to his aſſociates; and no ſooner had he communicated the particulars, than Dr. FRANKLIN gave up all for loſt.

" You have offended the Court of France, (ex-
" claimed the frigid philoſopher) and you have
" ruined America.

" Have patience, (ſaid SILAS DEANE,) 'till we
" receive an anſwer."

" An anſwer! we ſhall be ſent to the Baſ-
" tile."

In a few hours, the confidential Secretary makes his appearance.

" You

" You are requeſted, Gentlemen, by Mr. " SARTINE, to hold yourſelves ready for an in- " terview at Midnight."

" At Midnight! (ſaid Dr. FRANKLIN, as ſoon " as the Secretary had withdrawn) my prediction " is verified. Mr. DEANE, you have brought " deſtruction on the cauſe."

At midnight, the Ambaſſadors were hurried, in a coach and four to a villa, five leagues from Paris, and introduced to Mr. SARTINE. The fatal declaration was inſtantly ſigned—the Miniſter withdrew;—and many ſubſequent diſpatches from Lord Stormont were filled with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of the *pacific* and *friendly* intentions of France.

The Ambaſſadors returned in triumph, and Dr. FRANKLIN, when he drew off his dreſs coat, expreſſed himſelf in this extraordinary manner— " This coat I will preſerve as a trophy—for in " this coat I was groſsly inſulted and abuſed by " WEDDERBURN,* and in this coat I have taken " a full revenge."

I cannot avoid remarking, on this occaſion, though it may have the appearance of a digreſſion, that it is extremely impolitic to treat the leaders of a diſaffected people with rudeneſs and contempt. By offering an excluſive pardon, inſtead of a general amneſty, we loſt America. By treating

* On his examination.

treating Dr. FRANKLIN with ſeverity and inſolence, Mr. WEDDERBURN excited, even in the breaſt of a philoſopher, a fatal thirſt of revenge. To this may be added, a remark on the inutility and danger of crediting the polite aſſurances and flattering cordialities of the French Court. Lord STORMONT, though converſant with diplomatique *arts* and a conſummate maſter (as he pretends) of courtly deceptions, was fairly and effectually foiled by the open and determined ſpirit of a private citizen.

The laſt time I ſaw SILAS DEANE was on a bed of ſickneſs and death. He *ſent* for me.

AUTHOR.

Mr. DEANE, ſaid I, it gives me concern to ſee you indiſpoſed. I hope you are employed in the duties of an immortal being, and are "ſetting your houſe in order."

SILAS DEANE.

I ſent for you, my friend, to communicate my wiſhes, concerning *domeſtic* affairs; as to *religious topics*, I will give you no trouble. I have done with ſuch *ſtuff*—I have been taught the *truth*.

AUTHOR.

And pray what *is* Truth? I am anxious to be informed where you found it.

SILAS

SILAS DEANE.

Not in the New Teſtament, nor in the Old. I do not believe that a Virgin ever conceived a child, nor do I believe that forty thouſand people paſſed through the Red Sea.

AUTHOR.

Do you refuſe aſſent to the propoſition—" a " Virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a Son," becauſe it is *ſuperior* to your reaſon, or *contrary* to reaſon?

SILAS DEANE.

I do not ſay it is abſolutely contrary to *reaſon*, but it is certainly contrary to *experience*, and contrary to the Laws of Nature.

AUTHOR.

What do you mean by a *Law of Nature?*

SILAS DEANE.

A uniform operation, acting on determined principles, from all eternity.

AUTHOR.

Then, by what *Law of Nature* were the Sun, and Moon, and Earth, brought into exiſtence? Why does not this Law of Nature, thus acting inceſſantly, on determined principles, produce other Suns, and Moons, and habitable Orbs? In the unoccupied ſpace of our Solar Syſtem, there is ample room for the deity of your devotions to diſplay her uniform and unceaſing operations;

and yet—ſtrange to tell! the Hiſtory of the World does not furniſh one ſolitary inſtance of her prolific energies.——The Orbs in our Syſtem are materially, locally, and numerically the Orbs, which were noticed by Aſtronomers *three thouſand years ago*. Your deity is dead. I ſincerely wiſh, for the ſake of men diſpoſed, like yourſelf, to an eaſy reception of error, that our accuſtomed phraſeology were inverted—Creation, and all the common operations of Nature, are, in reality, MIRACLES; and the ſuſpenſion of thoſe imaginary laws is the reſtitution of Nature to her own merit and paſſive exiſtence. You do well to acknowledge, that the inhabitation of the Meſſiah, in the womb of a virgin is not *contrary* to reaſon, for amidſt the infinite poſſibilities of producing our ſpecies, it cannot be inferred, *a priori*, that the eſtabliſhed mode is the wiſeſt, or moſt eligible; but we infer its wiſdom and excellence from the fact—"Thus it "hath pleaſed the Lord." As far as *Reaſon* is concerned in the buſineſs, it is equally *miraculous* to produce a being by the common proceſs of traduction, as to produce a being by any other mode of operation. But, as you reſt your argument on its contrariety to Experience, give me leave to aſk you—Who was the father of Adam? You are taught, you ſay, by *experience*, that every child muſt have a father—but we have here an inſtance

to

to the contrary. If this be not ſufficient to ſhake your principles of infidelity, permit me to enquire who was the Mother of Adam? If it be contrary to Experience, and, by an induction from that contrariety to experience, if it be *impoſſible* for a child to be produced from a womb, not previouſly impregnated, how will you reconcile your reaſoning with the fact—" ADAM was formed without " entering any womb?

SILAS DEANE.

I believe in the eternal exiſtence of the world, and all that it contains.

AUTHOR.

Admitting, for a moment, the eternity of the univerſe, I deſire to be informed of your ſentiments reſpecting the Deity.

SILAS DEANE.

I deny the exiſtence of a Deity.

AUTHOR.

You do? But you admit the eternity of the univerſe, and conſequently you admit the eternity of mind; now, the firſt and beſt idea we conceive of God is—*eternal intelligence,* and then, by traditional induction, we diſcover his other infinite and eternal attributes.

SILAS DEANE.

Nonſenſe! There is no diſtinction between *matter* and *mind.*

AUTHOR.

Then the *Soul* is *material* and *mortal*?

SILAS DEANE.

Indiſputably. It is my *body* which *thinks*—when that periſhes I ſhall be no more. Some thouſand years hence the particles of my preſent frame may be jumbled together, and by the acceſſion of other matter form a horſe or a dog; perhaps a philoſopher—This is the Reſurrection, and I am thankful I am delivered from the dread of any other.

AUTHOR.

I feel more than I have power to expreſs! May GOD in mercy preſerve you from that deſtruction to which you are haſtening. Your conſcience, my friend, is in the awful ſtate deſcribed by the Apoſtle—it is *ſeared*. And indeed, I know no man living who has greater reaſon to wiſh that ſuch deluſions may be realiſed than yourſelf; for no man has been ſo active, no man ſo ſucceſsful in deluging America with civil blood, and in making it a ſcene of deſolation, a land of widows and orphans. But before we part, to meet no more—for I perceive your end is approaching—do inform me what man—what monſter—infuſed into your mind ſuch horrid blaſphemies? Name the wretch, who has thus dared to tear up by the roots the ſweeteſt conſolations of this tranſitory life, to render the proſpects of eternity beyond imagination

tion dreadful; to ruin your immortal ſoul, and annihilate the glorious and adorable Being, who gave you exiſtence!

SILAS DEANE.

Dr. PRIESTLEY.*

AUTHOR.

Dr. PRIESTLEY!!!

SILAS DEANE.

Yes, Dr. PRIESTLEY was my inſtructor, my ſaviour, and my god.

MRS. **********.

THAT this Lady is a *Papiſt* is acknowledged with regret by Proteſtants, and with an air of inſolent exultation by Catholics.

Dr. WITHERS' has youth and fortitude to ſupport him; and it appears from his printed Addreſs to the Court of King's Bench, that the ſeverities of the law ſerve only to give additional ardor to his ſpirit, and energy to his diction. But diſcretion

* I deſire to be unknown; nor will I gratify idle curioſity, but if any reſpectable character doubt the truth of this Narative, I will refer him to a Clergyman of eſtabliſhed reputation, who was an auricular witneſs of the ſame language and of the ſame avowal from this deluded man. A line directed for the Author, to be left at Mr. Buckland's 'till called for, will meet with due attention.

diſcretion in the *aged* is pardonable, if not honorable. I ſhall, therefore, ſpeak with reſerve.

Of the charge againſt her honour, on account of a foreign nobleman, nothing can be advanced with certainty, as the Defendant, it ſeems, had no opportunity allowed him to prove the fact. But it is clear that the Court conſidered her a *virtuous* woman, though her intimacy with a certain great perſonage is known to every man in the kingdom. And this I take to be a tacit avowal of Marriage. It is true, by the Act of Parliament paſſed in the days of William and Mary, ſuch union is *contrary to law*, but I have been informed by very reſpectable authority, that the lady intends to qualify for the throne by a *public recantation*, and that a ſpecial licence will be granted for that end by the *Pope*.

Whatever diviſion of ſentiments may prevail reſpecting the *virtue* of the lady, mankind appear unanimous in the acknowledgment of her *zeal*—her zeal for that mode of faith in which ſhe was educated.

The devotion of Her Highneſs is animated by no common motives. The vaſt ſpace ſhe occupies in the eyes of the *Faithful*, the adoration of the laiety, and the unbounded reſpect of the prieſthood are ſufficient to inflame even a *Stoic*. It is no wonder, therefore, if a lady, *conſtitutionally zealous*, believe herſelf commiſſioned by

Heaven

Heaven to reſtore the Catholic Church to its antient glory and dominion. The moment is certainly auſpicious to this auguſt deſign; nor will his Holineſs permit it to be loſt; if the moſt flattering homage, and the moſt aſſiduous attentions can enſure ſucceſs.

But though Catholics confide in the promiſe—the *gates of Hell* are never to prevail againſt them—they ought to be reminded, that the *hand of Heaven* may defeat the beſt concerted meaſures of the Conclave. Let her Royal Highneſs enjoin her Confeſſor to be more diſcreet—in *public*. Of all the prieſts and advocates of popery, which aſſemble at Mr. Coghan's, in Duke-ſtreet, Groſvenor-ſquare, this gentleman is the moſt ſanguine in his views, and the moſt intemperate in his language.

Mr. BURKE.

IT is unpardonably indecent to affirm that Mr. Burke is a Papiſt. It may be true, that his parents were Catholics—that he was educated at St. Omer's—and that he is the ſteadieſt friend to Popery the Houſe of Commons can boaſt. But I deſire

deſire it may not be forgoten that, *in contemplation of law*, he is a very ſincere Proteſtant.

Dining with Dr. PRICE, ſoon after Mr. BURKE's Apology to the good People of Briſtol made its appearance, I expreſſed my ſurpriſe at his celebrated eulogium on Popery, and his heterodox ideas of the reſponſibility of repreſentatives, Dr. PRICE exclaimed, with an emphaſis that made an indelible impreſſion on my mind—"BURKE "is *no Liberty Man*."

MR. FOX.

Mr. Fox might be juſtly offended, if I claſſed him with men who are influenced by *religious* ſentiments; for he evinced a ſpirit ſuperior to vulgar prejudices, long before boys, in general, begin to think. Encircled by his little friends at Eton, he uſed to declaim on the abſurdity of believing in God, "Whom no one ever ſaw, and of whom it "is impoſſible to have a juſt conception."

As I cannot ſuppoſe Mr. Fox has *ſeen* the Deity ſince he left Eton, he muſt conſider a book, which treats of the divine perfections, as an idle romantic impoſture. Nor do I imagine he has a predi-

predilection for any particular ſyſtem of faith. He feels himſelf equally at liberty to make *Popery* an inſtrument of ambition, and the *Religion of Nature* ſubſervient to his pleaſures.

Mr. SHERIDAN.

THIS gentleman is one of the enlightened philoſophers, who have diſcovered, by ſuperior brilliancy of genius, that Religion is nonſenſe, and morality—uſeleſs. But, as a dependant on the eleemoſynary bounty of his Royal Highneſs and his Grace of Norfolk, he will ſupport the petition of the papiſts *in* the Houſe, and illuſtrate the principles of Atheiſm *out* of it.

Mr. SAWBRIDGE.

IT would be inconſiſtent with candour and integrity not to allow Mr. Sawbridge the praiſe of patriotiſm, though his political principles preponderate in favor of a Republican form of govern-

ment. But his ſentiments on religious ſubjects are very reprehenſible. When the Diſſenters applied to Parliament for a repeal of the ſubſcription to the articles of the eſtabliſhment, they did not deſire any advocate for the meaſure to treat thoſe articles with *contempt*. Still leſs did they countenance the obloquy and deriſion thrown on the ſacred ſcriptures themſelves. This gentleman will recollect how nearly his imprudent conduct on the occaſion deprived him of a ſeat in Parliament. I aſſure him, upon my honor, that Mr. ATKINSON was highly benefited by his indiſcretion. The Citizens of London are not yet reconciled to Popery, or Deiſm. If Mr. SAWBRIDGE profit by this admonition, the enſuing Winter, my object is attained.

DR. PRICE.

IT is not eaſy to name a man more deſervedly eſteemed than Dr. PRICE. His conceptions of civil and political freedom are juſt and honorable. But, in his late ſermon, he laments the rapid increaſe of infidelity in other countries, and of "the *barbariſm of Methodiſm*" in this!

Barba-

Barbariſm of Methodiſm! Is this the language of Dr. PRICE, ſo celebrated for gentleneſs and liberality of ſpirit!

Barbarians! Let it be remembered, if Dr. PRICE can boaſt the authority of PRIESTLEY for not aſcribing divine honors to the Meſſiah, theſe *Barbarians* can appeal to the *Law* and to the *teſtimony* of God in vindication of thoſe honors. But it is quite natural to contend zealouſly for *Toleration*, when we want any favours beſtowed; and to betray a moſt intolerant ſpirit in our conduct toward thoſe who diſſent from our opinions.

I ſhould be happy to be informed, why this gentleman, in his *printed* diſcourſe, touches ſo lightly on the qualifications of a Prime Miniſter, that no particular deſignation of perſon is diſcoverable, though, in the delivery of his ſermon, he was ſo pointed in his deſcription of a *Gambler* —a *Spendthrift*—and an *Infidel*, that the audience immediately recognized the portrait of—Mr. FOX? Was my venerable friend apprehenſive leſt any of the Members of the *Whig** Club—or of the *Conſtitutional Society* ſhould adviſe a proſecution in the Crown Office!

* WHIG Clubs at war with the PRESS!!!!

JUDGE ***** FABER.

I never knew the value of a *free preſs*, 'till I attempted to delineate on paper the political features of this extraordinary gentleman. It is of infinite conſequence to the peace and proſperity of England that the true character of Judge FABER ſhould be publiſhed to the world—but *I dare not.* The impriſonment of Dr. WITHERS for a libel being a general topic of diſcourſe, and his Addreſs to the Court of King's Bench being greatly applauded for zeal and conſtitutional argument, I was induced to read it, and I confeſs that I was ignorant 'till *that moment* of the danger to which every citizen is expoſed, who preſumes to utter even Truth itſelf. I had not the moſt diſtant idea, that a mode of proſecution exiſted in this Land of Freedom, by which a citizen may be ſentenced to *impriſonment for life*, at the ſuit of a private individual, for publiſhing Truth.

But in the Crown Office, it ſeems, you need only prove the *fact of publiſhing*, and then fine and impriſonment follow; for the Defendant is not allowed to juſtify his conduct, by eſtabliſhing the truth of his pamphlet. But ſuppoſe him unable to pay the fine? Suppoſe him unable to procure ſecurities for the peace? He is irrepara-

bly

bly undone, and doomed to wear out his life in a priſon.

During the late exertions of Mr. BASTARD, Member for Devon, a caſe was ſtated in Parliament of a poor woman, who had urged a right to a certain pew, in a country church, in terms that diſpleaſed the Vicar's Lady. A proceſs was commenced in the Spiritual Court—the expences were enormous—the penance conſiderable—and the poor woman, in conſequence, was excommunicated, and thrown into a jail, where ſhe languiſhed *ſix and forty years!* No Act of Grace could relieve her. The debt was due to the *Church*. The nation reprobated ſuch cruelties, and put an end to them for ever. And will a people, ſo long celebrated for their ſtrong attachment to freedom, ſuffer *Liberty of Speech*—the firſt and deareſt of *all liberties* to exiſt under reſtrictions ſo baſe and degrading? Would it not be infinitely more merciful to appoint a *Licencer of the Preſs?* Printers, Publiſhers and Authors would then be in no danger of fine and perpetual impriſonment.

But as *Truth* is offenſive and illegal, ſuppoſe we were to try the fate of *Falſhood*.

Judge ***** FABER has many enemies, who take pleaſure in traducing his character, but THEODOSIUS will adhere to truth. Judge ***** FABER then is NOT a traitor to *this* country. His eſtates

tates ARE confiſcated by Congreſs, who place NO confidence in the man; for he did NOT diſpatch thouſands of inflammatory letters into the Southern Colonies, when a privy counſellor to Governor TYRON. He did NOT inform WASHINGTON, that the unfortunate ANDRE might be expected within his lines. He did NOT advice Lord DORCHESTER to reject Trial by Jury. He has NOT recommended a majority of Catholics in the council of Quebec. He is NOT a Catholic himſelf. He has NO correſpondence with any Member of Congreſs; nor has he adviſed the Americans to demand the forts on the Weſtern frontiers.*

What a picture of patriotiſm! Judge FABER is indeed a genius of the firſt diſtinction. It was a common remark in America, many years ago—"Some people go to ſchool to the Devil—but "theDevil himſelf is the pupil of ———." I dare appeal to every citizen of America, as well as every loyaliſt in England, that I ſpeak the language of the Thirteen Colonies. And yet, it ſeems, what every body ſays may be a libel!

I will hazard a prediction—if Mr. PITT be not on his guard, Lord DORCHESTER will be duped, and the fine provinces of Quebec be in the dominions of Congreſs in leſs than *four years*.

I could

* When the great and good ally is in a condition to ſecond the demand, it will be made, and MUST be granted.

I could, indeed, unfold a tale, that would awaken a juſt ſuſpicion in the breaſts of Miniſtry, and be the happy means of preſerving Quebec from deſtruction; for I have known Judge ***** FABER more than half a century. But the people who tamely ſuffer political information to be ſtigmatized with infamous epithets, and its authors puniſhed as felons, have little claim to the ſacrifice of a hoary head. When crimimal proſecutions for libels are aboliſhed, and when citizens are permitted to juſtify their language by an appeal to facts, I will ſpeak out, in terms, that he *who runs may read*. Or, if Judge ***** FABER will pledge his honour to reſort to argument and fact inſtead of pillory and impriſonment, I will publiſh the ſecret hiſtory of his conduct to the world.

MR. JOHN HORNE TOOKE.

THIS Gentleman is not of ſufficient conſequence in the eſtimation of mankind, to induce me to notice him on this occaſion, if he had not unhappily profeſſed himſelf an advocate for the Church of England. This, I am afraid, will bring

bring odium on the cauſe; for by a ſtrange kind of fatality, Mr. TOOKE injures the party whom he affects to defend.

That one, who in early life was diſmiſſed from the uſherſhip of an Academy, for inculcating ſtrange ideas of religion in the minds of youth—who is an apoſtate from the profeſſion—whoſe creed, according to his quondam companion Mr. WILKES, has always been *non credo*—who has publicly aſſerted that Papiſts, though more vigilant, numerous, and triumphant than at any period ſince the Reformation, *are no longer to be feared*—who is a republican by profeſſion, and a Member of the Conſtitutional Society—ſhould yet be and enemy to the Diſſenters, and a friend to the Church of England, is myſterious and paradoxical. But ſo it is, Mr. TOOKE, publicly, and in my hearing, declared, that "Diſſenters ought to "conform to the Religion eſtabliſhed by Law." And doubtleſs, if their conſciences were of the ſame dimenſions as Mr. TOOKE's, they would.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

LET us ſuppoſe the human race united, as one great family, by a commerce of benevolence, by an intercourſe of friendſhip and affection—Let us add to this ideal ſcene, a univerſal conformity in moral and religious ſentiment—Let the rational creation worſhip before the throne of GOD as with one heart and one mind—Let ambition, and fraud, and violence be unknown.

The ſword is ſheathed—Miniſters of juſtice have no employ—Teſts of conformity and allegiance are abſurd; for the King of Kings is their ſovereign, and obedience to his laws is at once their duty and *Delight*. Glorious ſpectacle! Even Angels ſurvey it with rapture and admiration!

But Angels know that I am deſcribing a viſionary ſcene, that I have paſſed the limits of mortality, and am now anticipating a ſyſtem of felicity that *can* be realized only in *Heaven*.

I am not, therefore, the advocate of war offenſive, or defenſive, nor of Teſts of Allegiance and Conformity—*abſtractedly conſidered*. In themſelves, they are Evils; but the *preſent condition* of human nature renders them expedient.

UNLIMITED TOLERATION.

I ADVANCE it as a poſition which no maſter of the human nature will controvert, that unlimited toleration of ſentiment is productive of unlimited licentiouſneſs of conduct. Toleration, therefore, muſt be be limited. Without endangering the very exiſtence of ſociety, neither the preſs nor the pulpit can be indulged in unreſtricted effuſions of fancy and falſhood.

I hope, in charity, the SOCINIAN, who rejects the worſhip of the MESSIAH from ſincere conviction of the unity of the Divine Being, and a pious dread of aſcribing the glory due to his name to a meer creature, may be undeceived in *Heaven*. I accede, alſo, to his wiſhes of withdrawing from the eſtabliſhed forms of devotion, of ſubmitting his ſentiments to public view from the preſs, and even of enforcing them, with becoming argument and decorum, from the pulpit. But when a Socinian Miniſter, like Dr. PRIESTLEY, has the temerity to attack the Chriſtian Religion from the pulpit and the preſs, in terms of inſult and abhorrence,

when

when he affirms, in language that cannot be miſtaken, that the Virgin MARY is a WHORE, and the Redeemer a BASTARD, I feel an honeſt indignation in my breaſt, and conceive *forbearance is criminal.*

If Toleration be univerſal and unlimited, the DEIST muſt be tolerated in his impious attacks on all that is deemed ſacred by Chriſtians of every denomination—If Toleration be univerſal and unlimited, the ATHEIST muſt be tolerated in his blaſphemies againſt that awful and adorable GOD in whom *we live, and move, and have our being.* And finally we muſt tolerate a defence of *Perjury, Seduction, Murder, Robbery* and *Suicide;* for where there is no moral law there can be no moral tranſgreſſion—But there is no written revelation, ſays the Deiſt; there is no GOD, ſays the Atheiſt, and therefore there is no law. Bleſſed notions to be inſtilled into the minds of the riſing generation!

On all popular ſubjects, perſpicuity is indiſpenſable; I ſhall, therefore, ſubdivide this ſection into its leading ideas.

TOLERATION.

WHEN a Philoſopher contemplates the human race as ſprung from one common anceſtor, and as living under the immediate protection of GOD,

their common parent, national hoſtilities affect him as at once impious and abſurd.

Full of glorious ideas of univerſal friendſhip and felicity, he exhorts the Rulers of the World to diſband their defenſive armies, to convert their fleets into veſſels of commerce, and to *learn the art of war no more.**

But this charming picture of univerſal friendſhip and felicity has no exiſtence but in a poetical imagination. I even queſtion if ſuch a ſyſtem of benevolence be compatible with the preſent conſtitution of human nature. Let us reflect on the animoſities of the moſt tender alliances, from the death of ABEL to the preſent moment. Let us advert to the diſcord and duplicity in the circle of our friendſhips, ariſing from paſſion, caprice, and colliſion of intereſts—to the conteſts in Courts of Law, reſulting from obſtinacy or iniquity—to the violence offered to unoffending individuals in perſon, property, and fame—and then let us eſtimate the probabilities of eſtabliſhing univerſal innocence and peace between nations ſeparated by ſeas, agitated by diſcordant intereſts, and influenced by local and religious prejudice.—— However ardently this conſummation of human happineſs is to be deſired, the period, I fear, is far diſtant, when *Swords may be ſecurely converted*

* Iſaiah.

verted into Plow Shares, and Spears into Pruning Hooks---when Commerce will have no Rivals, and Thrones no Ambition--in a word, when the human HEART will no longer be ungenerous or unjuſt.

But if hoſtilities appear ſhocking and abſurd, when commenced with a view to gratify the ambition of Princes, the intereſt of the Few, or the prejudices of the multitude, ought they not to be deemed more impious and abſurd, when directed againſt CONSCIENCE?

Beyond controverſy. *Religious* hoſtilities are ſuperlatively ſhocking and irrational. To aim at ſupremacy over the conſcience of man is a daring attack on the prerogatives of the Deity; and I hope my countrymen will ever ſtrenuouſly reſiſt a SPIRITUAL DICTATOR.*

If it be expedient, for the general good, to impoſe Reſtrictions on our Conduct in Society, it is yet more rational and expedient to impoſe Reſtrictions on the Communication of Sentiments, becauſe *moral Sentiment is the Patron and Progenitor of moral Conduct.*

POPERY.

* Then they ought to reſiſt Popery.

POPERY.

Dr. PRIESTLEY contends that Papiſts ought to be conſidered as Catholic Diſſenters, and enjoy all the privileges of Proteſtants.

I am ſurpriſed the worthy Doctor did not claſs JEWS among Proteſtant Diſſenters. They will do as much honour to the OPEN CONSTITUTION of which he dreams, as the Catholics. And indiſputably they do more honor to the Chriſtian Religion than the Doctor himſelf. A Jew is a living miracle of the power of the Moſt High, and of his reſentments againſt Sin; a convincing Evidence of the Truth of Chriſtianity, and a moſt affecting illuſtration of the divine prediction—Thou ſhalt be ſcattered abroad, and become an aſtoniſhment, and a bye-word, *among all the Nations of the Earth.*

In oppoſing this extraordinary coalition of Popery and the Proteſtant Faith, I deſire you to be perſuaded, my Friends and Brethren of the Church of Chriſt, that I am actuated by the profoundeſt reverence for Truth and the Rights of my fellow Men. I ſincerely wiſh that Catholics could be admitted to the full enjoyment of every privilege and immunity to which, as Engliſhmen, they

they are entitled. But this is abſolutely inconſiſtent with the dictates of prudence and experience.

Becauſe Popery is INTOLERANT.

I do not deny that the advocates of the Proteſtant Faith have been occaſionally influenced by intemperate zeal, and unjuſtifiable prejudice. I bluſh, when I add, even Calvin *once* committed an Heretic to the flames.

Zeal, in fact, is the offspring of conviction; for it is difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to be ſincere without experiencing an ardent deſire for the converſion of others. And to propagate apparent Truth is not only innocent, but laudable.

CATHOLIC CONVERSION.

IT is not, therefore, the *Deſire* of making Proſelytes to Popery, which I deem reprehenſible, but the *Object* or *final cauſe* of their zeal; for it is not to convert Men from *moral* error that they compaſs Sea and Land, but to make them ſubſervient to the views of the Popiſh Hierarchy. Proteſtant Diſſenters are ſenſibly affected with the importance of religious truth; and they manifeſt great pleaſure on the acceſſion of *worthy* men to their ſeveral ſyſtems of Diſcipline and Faith. But, in general, they are laudably ſolicitous to guard their churches from

from diſgrace. They admit no perſon to the Communion, who is not of unblemiſhed repute; and if any member be negligent in moral conduct, they never fail to admoniſh him of the inconſiſtency of his conduct with his Creed. But no ſort of enquiry is made into the moral principles of a convert to Popery. It is ſufficient if he abjure "*Error,*" if he attend to an eſtabliſhed routine of forms and ceremonies, if he confeſs his ſins to the Prieſt, and pay handſomely for abſolution.

They have, alſo, a motive to the converſion of heretics, which may be termed—*perſonal*; a good Catholic is firmly perſuaded that every proſelyte to Popery—effected by his means—will atone for a multitude of ſins, and increaſe his glory and felicity in the life to come. And thus the ſpoils are divided between the prieſthood and the people—the former are rewarded with the *temporal emoluments* of the converſion, and the latter with the *Glory*.

I have my objections, alſo, to their *modes* of making Proſelytes; for admitting the converſion of the *Will* to be the prerogative of Deity, it is in the province of man, I preſume, to point out the excellencies of Virtue and the deformities of Vice; but the Catholics have few ideas of Religion, beyond the obſervance of a ceremonious ſyſtem of Duties; and, therefore, when a perſon, by any means whatever, is induced to obſerve thoſe external Duties he is, *bona fide*, a Catholic.

And,

And, if to Conformity be added Zeal and active Exertions in the glorious enterprize of proſelyting the world to the "*only* Church in which we can be "ſaved," he is a *good* Catholic.

Hence, if a Peaſant be reduced by ſickneſs to a ſtate of diſtreſs, the Steward of ſome neighbouring Catholic—of Mr. Weſt, for inſtance, or Lord Petre—will wait on the poor man, and expound to him *the Way of Salvation*.

Or if a Widow, or poor Man, have any *Children*, the benevolent Catholics kindly undertake to *inſtruct them*. And I can appeal to reſpectable documents when I aſſert, that there are more young proſelytes to Popery *now* than at the end of the laſt century.

But the moſt horrid mode of Converſion is that of *Fire*, or *bodily Torment*. It is a fact beyond controverſy, that many thouſands of American Indians were *tortured* into a Confeſſion of the Catholic Faith, and then *executed* to prevent their relapſing into Paganiſm. This corroborates my poſition, that—a Confeſſion of the Catholic Faith, without any correſpondent Purity of Life, or even Acquieſcence of Heart, conſtitutes Popery—and when they expect the Proſelyte will retract the *extorted* Confeſſion, they ſacrifice the *temporal emoluments* of converting an Heretic for an *eternal Reward* of Glory, and *put him to Death*. The motive here aſſigned for deſtroying the Indian Converts, gives

probability to a popular Story. A Proteſtant was in imminent danger of Drowning. No one was near to afford relief but a Prieſt. *You are a Heretic and I cannot ſave you.—Oh, pray do, worthy Sir, pray do ſave me.—Then renounce Hereſy, turn Catholic, and confeſs your Sins.—I conſent.—Bravo! you are now ſecure of Salvation, and to prevent your doing yourſelf an injury by recanting I charitably permit you to* SINK.

The Thumb Screws, and other infernal inſtruments of Torture, which had received the pious Benediction of his Holineſs the Pope, and were ſhipped in ſuch abundance on board the Spaniſh Armada, were deſtined to promote the double purpoſe of all Catholic Converſions—to torture our Anceſtors into a Confeſſion of Faith, and to terrify them out of their Property.

If any Proteſtant imagine that Papiſts are now changed, I can aſſure him with great truth and ſolemnity, and with the honeſt integrity of a Proteſtant and an Engliſhman, he ERRS—his benevolent heart has been abuſed by artful and inſidious repreſentations.

If a Papiſt dare affirm, that any Revolution in Sentiment or Practice has taken place in the Catholic Church, I charge him with uttering an *impudent Falſehood*, and I hereby defy him to demonſtrate whence this change originates.

STATE

STATE *of* POPERY,

In EUROPE *and* AMERICA.

EUROPE. Nothing can be more abſurd than to infer the Decline of Popery from the Revolutions on the Continent. Such ſuperficial, more properly, ſuch intereſted reaſoners ought to be reminded that Popery and UNLIMITED Tyranny are the moſt repugnant things in nature. In all catholic countries, the Church and the State have diſtinct intereſts; and though it is a *Dictum* of the Prieſthood that Kings reign *Jure divino*, independant of popular choice, and that the ſovereign's will is Law, this is ſpoken in reference to the *Laity*; for the Clergy form a ſeparate community, an *Imperium in Imperio*, and their privileges and immunities are ſecured by their own laws, and by the coronation oath of their princes.

When thoſe privileges and immunities are invaded, kings are impriſoned and dethroned without ſcruple or remorſe. Thus the Revolution in Brabant has been effected ſolely by the intrigues of the Clergy. Their rights were infringed by the Don Quixotte of Auſtria, and the Holy Fathers vow'd eternal revenge. With the crucifix and the ſword they have driven this vibrating monarch

from every foot of ground that he poſſeſſed in the Netherlands; and may the good genius of freedom prevent his return; *one* tyrant* is certainly ſufficient.

The Revolution in France has been effected by the concurrence of Atheiſm and Popery, aided by the Proteſtant intereſt.

The attack on the property and privileges of the church muſt be aſcribed entirely to Proteſtants and Atheiſts; for it is a melancholy fact that the nobility and philoſophers of France are in general Atheiſts. At leaſt they are Deiſts, and hold the Bible in ſupreme contempt.

On what has been advanced on the preſent ſubject, give me leave, my Friends and Fellow Citizens, to make two remarks.

1. The Church of England differs from the Church of Rome in this important reſpect—*it has no intereſts diſtinct from the State.*

2. If Popery, by a happy combination of cauſes, be weakened in France, it is no reaſon we ſhould reſtore it to its ancient energy in England.

One is a triumph over ſuperſtition and ſlavery; the other a ſacrifice of truth and freedom.

AMERICA, *United States.* The proſpect of eſtabliſhing Popery in this country, is extremely flattering.

Supported

* The Church of Rome.

Supported by the writings of infidel philoſophers, and encouraged by the benevolent, but *impolitic* acquieſcence of deluded Chriſtians, Catholics have planned a ſyſtem of dominion which no power on earth will be able to ſubvert.

Eſtimating the inhabitants of the United States at three millions, I am not afraid of being contradicted if I affirm, that *two millions* are already Catholics, or under the controul of Catholics.

CANADA. Quebec, or more ſtrictly ſpeaking, the Regions of Canada may, with truth, be ſaid to be the moſt beautiful country in the world. In extent, it is ſuperior to all the States of America united; in ſoil, as various; but in popularity, it is moſt wretched; for it is only as eighteen to one, in compariſon with the United States. This is owing entirely to Popery and the feudal Syſtem. Had a liberal government been eſtabliſhed on Britiſh principles, the American emigrants and refugees, inſtead of cultivating VERDMONT, which five and twenty years ago was a wilderneſs, would have ſettled in Quebec, and made it more than a compenſation for the loſs of America.

Verdmont has it in contemplation to unite with Congreſs. The motive is intereſted and obvious. The Merchants of Verdmont enjoy no communication with the River St. Lawrence, but on payment of heavy impoſts; ſo that for one buſhel of ſalt, they pay eight buſhels of wheat. Of this intolerable

tolerable burden they juſtly complain. Their complaints are heard and encouraged. And there is at this moment a plan before Congreſs to ***** *** *cætera deſunt*—till the preſs in England is free.

When the project is realized, ſagacious politicians will exclaim — *who could have thought it?* Theodoſius thinks it, and *knows* it. Let his words be remembered.

In all my travels through Canada, I never met with more than half a dozen Proteſtant Miniſters, who had congregations. But of well attended maſs-houſes I do not eſtimate fewer than *thirteen hundred!* this we owe to the impolitic Quebec bill, which gave prodigious encouragement to Popery, but neither enlarged commerce, nor increaſed population.

LOWER RANKS *of* CATHOLICS.

The lower orders of Papiſts are preciſely the ſame blind bigoted mortals as in the eighth century. It is, indeed, morally impoſſible they ſhould be otherwiſe. Their attachment to the Church of Rome depends on a perſuaſion of its being the *only Church*. Conſequently to extirpate hereſy is the moſt glorious work in which they can be employed. They deſpiſe the reformation; they abhor it; their children are *now* publicly taught in maſs houſes, that the Proteſtant Faith is Hereſy,

and

and the Reformation a wicked apoſtacy from TRUTH and GOD. I have heard them, and that very lately.

When the inferior orders of Catholics are drunk or enraged, they *ſpeak their minds*. I hope to ſee the day, ſaid a poor woman, at Helmſley, in Yorkſhire, when the hearts of heretics will be ſold in the public ſhambles!

A young Gentleman of family and fortune, paid me a viſit on his return from DOUAY, where he had received his education. In the courſe of the day, I opened a book, and read the account of a bleſſed martyr of the Church who was beheaded on the top of a hill—the head rolled down the hill into a pond of water—the bleſſed martyr roſe from the block, walked gravely down the hill, found his head, reſtored it to its ſituation, and then preached to the aſtoniſhed multitude, and converted every ſoul of them to the truth, as it is in—the POPE.

And do you believe that? I do, ſaid the youth, and immediately confirmed the fact, by relating a ſimilar tale.

Then you may ſafely credit, I rejoined, the miracle of the bleſſed St. Patrick, who ſwam acroſs the Liffy, with his head in—*his mouth*.

Prieſts can aſſume the form of angels of light, and plead as forcibly for toleration as for perſecution. A general toleration, an OPEN CONSTI-

TUTION

TUTION is now their aim. And hence their language in Pamphlets and Newſpapers breathes a ſpirit of liberality and benevolence. This ſcheme to introduce Popery by an OPEN CONSTITUTION was attempted by James the Second, but the Biſhops and Proteſtant Diſſenters united in oppoſition to the artful, infernal project.

When King William dined with the Lord Mayor, who was of a diſſenting family, and attached to their intereſts, He deſired to know in what manner he could manifeſt his gratitude and regard to the Proteſtant Diſſenters. Shall I promote a Repeal of the Teſt and Corporation Acts, my Lord? May it pleaſe your Majeſty, Proteſtant Diſſenters have no ſuch wiſh: anxious as they are to enjoy every right of ſubjects and fellow citizens, they will patiently endure the ſalutary reſtrictions of the law, rather than open a door to POPERY; which they are convinced will be the caſe, if all men INDISCRIMINATELY be admitted to power and controul in our fleets, our armies, and our government.

ENGLAND. James the Third, though ambitious of power, was ſottiſh and inattentive. But we have now on the throne of theſe realms—I uſe the language of Papiſts—a Prince of unexampled activity and zeal. Henry the Ninth is a paragon of devotion, and though he has no proſpect of enjoying

enjoying the ſovereignty himſelf, he is firmly bent on leaving an eaſy acceſſion for the King of Sardinia.

It is ſcarcely credible how ſanguine the hopes of the Catholics are that we muſt again have recourſe to the continent for a King. The diſorder, they contend, is HEREDITARY. "One of the junior branches has already been ILL. It is a Viſitation from God to puniſh USURPERS."

And thus they flatter themſelves with the Proſpects of a ſecond RESTORATION. And you, my Proteſtant Friends, are called on to ſecond their ambitious projects, by admiting them to ſeats in parliament, to a participation of the government, to the command of our fleets and our armies. As to the oath of abjuration, they have leave to take it when they pleaſe. It is no ſort of impediment to their deſigns. It would give them the ſincereſt pleaſure, if ANY OATH qualified them for an office of truſt. They would take it in a moment, for they know that when a kingdom is under the Pope's INTERDICTION, no magiſtrate can adminiſter an oath *binding on the conſcience*. They would cheerfully comply with the ſacramental Teſt, but for this inconvenience—they could no longer *profeſs the Catholic Religion*.

No man on Earth is a more zealous friend to liberal inveſtigation than myſelf. No man leſs bigoted to the NON-ESSENTIALS of devotion.

Wherever I diſcover SINCERITY and SIMPLICITY of ſoul, I hope the beſt. Thus a perſon, who is perſuaded of the peccability and imperfection of our firſt parents, and that the conduct of Adam, in ſo eaſy and ſo early a revolt from his allegiance, is inexplicable on any other hypotheſis, may allow with joy and gratitude the atonement of the MESSIAH, and the operations of the ſpirit. And when ſuch diſquiſitions are conducted with politeneſs and Chriſtian love, they are conducive to edification.

But, I confeſs, I tremble at the idea of an OPEN PRESS, from which an Atheiſt may pour out the peſtilential effuſions of a heart at enmity with GOD, or an "*enlightened*" Socinian inform mankind, that the Holy Spirit is a *whore-maſter*, and the MESSIAH a *Baſtard*. We ought to diſtinguiſh between the freedom of a RELIGIOUS preſs, and the freedom of an INFIDEL preſs.

CHURCH

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

AGAINST this awful inundation of Popery and Atheiſm, I ſee no barrier, no aſylum but in the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

This language may appear extraordinary in a PROTESTANT DISSENTER; but it is the language of diſpaſſionate thought and ſincere conviction.

I am not requeſting a general conformity to the ordinances of the eſtabliſhment. I mean only to affirm, that the beſt intereſts of religion, and the beſt privileges of Proteſtant Diſſenters co-exiſt with the Church of England.

We have the experience of a century to aſſure us, that the Church of England is actuated by the moſt liberal and friendly diſpoſition. Places of worſhip, in the diſſenting intereſt, multiply and flouriſh in every part of the iſland. Perſecution is unknown. Miniſters of the eſtabliſhment aſſociate with Nonconformiſts, and the utmoſt harmony exiſts among every deſcription of Proteſtants.

But this project of an OPEN CONSTITUTION—this monſtrous coalition of Papiſts and Diſſenters will eventually SUBVERT the CHURCH of ENGLAND; becauſe Diſſenters and Papiſts, from principles of honour and conſcience, will ſtrive

to weaken and deſtroy a Church founded in "APOSTACY"—and "SUPERSTITION."

And with a ſecret intention to erect their own ſyſtems on its ruins, they will unite in its deſtruction, and act in *concert* to promote a *ſeparate* view.

I muſt not omit to notice, that this novel conſtitution of Proteſtants and Papiſts will effectually deſtroy peace and good neighbourhood.

The inconvenience of a general election will be perpetual. Every town, every hamlet in the kingdom will be diſtracted with inteſtine broils; and the jealouſy of rival intereſts—Papiſt, Churchmen, and Diſſenters—will break out with violence on the nomination of an Exciſeman, or the election of a Mayor.

The CONSTITUTION, alſo, will be ultimately ſubverted.

We are deafened with the applauſes of "LIBERAL MINDS"—and are told, in every paper that is publiſhed, that UNIVERSAL Toleration will be "*demanded*" and obtained. But, my friends, let us pauſe before we embark in ſo perilous an enterprize, leſt that venerable fabric, the CONSTITUTION of ENGLAND, be overwhelmed in ruin. Let us conſult reaſon, and diſregard the enthuſiaſm of the Benevolent, and the illuſions of deſigning men.

In the firſt place let us reflect, that a general toleration in France is no rule of conduct for England.

England. There is no analogy in the civil and religious ſituation of the two countries. The Proteſtant Faith is favourable to freedom, *civil* and *religious*. And, therefore, if Proteſtants be admitted into the councils and civil offices of a Popiſh ſtate, we have abundant cauſe to rejoice. But it would be folly in the extreme to admit Papiſts into the councils and civil offices of a Proteſtant ſtate. It would be reducing this country to the condition of France, before her emancipation.

Secondly, we are by no means to ſuppoſe that Papiſts countenance this acceſſion of Proteſtant influence in the government of France. They are ſhallow politicians, indeed, who do not perceive, that the meaſure originated with the ATHEISTS, and that Papiſts acquieſce in it from *Neceſſity*.

It is the wiſh of Atheiſts to have no religion but that of Nature; and for the conſummation of this favourite ſcheme, they labour inceſſantly. All eſtabliſhments under Heaven, Popiſh or Proteſtant, are held by them in equal contempt. *Tros tyriuſve—nullo diſcrimine agetur.*

Thirdly, let it be conſidered, that in the conteſt for civil and political ſuperiority in this OPEN CONSTITUTION, we ſhall live in endleſs diſquietude and animoſity, 'till ſome party gain the aſcendancy. Now let it be ſuppoſed, that POPERY is triumphant—will it ſupport the CONSTITUTION? No. The Catholic Church—I leave the Pope out

of

the queſtion—never did, never will ſupport any King or Conſtitution that dares abridge the dominion of the Prieſthood. To corroborate this poſition, I appeal to the Hiſtory of England, to the Hiſtory of the Chriſtian World. The Emperor has been *reforming*, or he would not have been dethroned in Flanders. The Catholic Church forms an *imperium in imperio*, a conſtitution governed by its own laws. Its dominion is SPIRITUAL, and its privileges immenſe. If theſe be preſerved inviolate, it is of little conſequence to a Popiſh Biſhop, whether the monarchy be limited or deſpotic. Were the choice preſented, he might prefer the latter, as ſlaves are uſually more ignorant than freemen, and of courſe more *obſequious*.

Fourthly, let it be conſidered, that *Diſſenters*, as well as Papiſts, *have* been in power. Their reverence for the KING—the CONSTITUTION—and the CHURCH of ENGLAND is on record.

Fifthly, permit me to add, it is the avowed intention of the Catholics not to reſt 'till they enjoy civil and military power.

I am indebted for this information, to Mr. BERINGTON of Birmingham, a Papiſt, who has the confidence to aſſert in his pamphlet, that "the Government, and Conſtitution will be perfectly ſecure in the hands either of Catholics "or Diſſenters."

I thank

I thank this gentleman for throwing off the MASK, but I aſſure him his pamphlet has filled me with the moſt ſerious and painful apprehenſions of that anarchy and ruin, which will be realized, when the people of England are ſeduced into the belief, that the Conſtitution can be ſafe in the hands of Papiſts or Proteſtant ſectaries.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER III.

ADDRESS

To PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

CALVINISTS.

I AM firmly perſuaded, my dear Friends, that you hold in the deepeſt abhorrence the horrid notions of Dr. Prieſtley concerning the Son of God and the Immortality of the Soul. And will you countenance meaſures that will ſanction his blaſphemies, and diſſeminate them with vigour and effect?

Admitting it to be deſirable for your poorer Brethren to be Exciſemen, or your wealthier Friends to be employed in Civil and Military Offices; will you, for ſo abject a conſideration, diſhonour him, who bought you with his blood? If your love to the Redeemer be ſincere, I call on you to exert all the powers of your mind, and all your

your influence in Society, to diſſipate the impending ſtorm, and ſupport that Church by which you are protected.

ARMINIANS.

You believe that Chriſt, by his active and paſſive obedience, made Atonement for Sin, and is able *to ſave to the uttermoſt* all who chooſe to truſt in his Name, and manifeſt due obedience to his Will. Then I conjure you, my Brethren, by the ſpotleſs innocence of his life, and the infinite merits of his death, that you protect his name from inſult, and his embaſſy from profanation. Ariſe and vindicate his ſacred dignity: nor ſuffer the periſhing concerns of this tranſitory ſtate to ſeduce you from your allegiance; remember his own awful words—*Whoſoever denieth me before Men, him will I deny before my Father and his Holy Angels.*

ARIANS.

The illuſtrious Being, who created the Heavens and the Earth, and in whom dwelt* *the* fullneſs of the Godhead—whoſe life was a continued diſplay of benevolence and virtue—who condeſcended to taſte of Death, and then roſe triumph-

* According to their own Creed.

ant from the Grave—was ſurely no IMPOSTOR! But if he be a "BASTARD," he muſt be an impoſtor—and infinitely the greateſt, the ſun ever beheld.

Independently, therefore, of all civil and political concerns, I earneſtly and ſolemnly enjoin you, from motives of reſpect to the Son of God, whom you profeſs to love, and whom, in a certain ſenſe, you ADORE: to oppoſe the ANTICHRISTIAN Conſtitution of open and concealed indels.

DISSENTING MINISTERS.

I HAVE the happineſs to find, that many Miniſters diſtinguiſhed for learning, piety, and moral virtue, are offended, are ALARMED at the proceedings of their brethren in the diſſenting miniſtry. They abhor the abuſe of ſacred ſcripture in the adminiſtration of the Sacrament to infidels, and they would gladly unite on a ground of RELIGIOUS Reformation; but as to ſoliciting, as to *demanding* civil employ for Non Conformiſts, they deem it indecent and abſurd.

In human affairs, MOTIVES, unhappily! differ from the PRETENSE. My brethren in the diſſenting

ſenting miniſtry *pretend* they aim to procure for their Congregations the enjoyment of their RIGHTS.

Now the very pretenſe is abſurd; for the term RIGHT muſt refer either to a *natural* right or to a *civil* right. But it is ſoleciſtical and abſurd in the higheſt degree to talk of a *natural Right* to be an Exciſeman, or a Secretary of State. And as to *civil Rights*, they depend on the pleaſure of a majority of Citizens. Every man, in a ſtate of nature, is at liberty to worſhip the Deity as he pleaſes, being his own lord and law-giver; but when a number of men aſſociate for their common good, the MAJORITY have indiſputably a right to eſtabliſh a particular mode of worſhiping GOD, to make public proviſion for its ſupport, and to protect it from ſubverſion, by demanding conformity in all who diſcharge offices in the ſtate, of truſt and influence. If any individual be diſſatisfied, he is at liberty to withdraw from the community. To *compel* him to remain is a violation of natural right. To *compel* him to worſhip the Deity, in a manner offenſive to conſcience, is unpardonable tyranny, and a violation of the inherent rights of Nature. But there is no infringement of the Rights of Nature in requiring conformity to the eſtabliſhed religion, from all who execute the laws; and as to a CIVIL Right to execute the laws without conformity, it has no exiſtence; for it is or-

dained by law, that non-conformiſts ſhall be excluded. But of a Right that has no exiſtence, there can be no violation. Againſt this plain, common ſenſe argument no ſophiſtry will avail.

If it be aſked whether, *a priori*, the majority ought to form *any* eſtabliſhments, I anſwer—*yes*. The condition of human ſociety requires it. In younger life, I was not of this opinion. But I am now convinced, that eſtabliſhed Popery, eſtabliſhed Paganiſm—dreadful evils both of them—would be infinitely more conducive to the Common Good, than the ſyſtem of infidelity which certain men are aiming to eſtabliſh on the ruins of the Church of England.

Avarice and ambition, I fear, are the MOTIVES by which my diſſenting Brethren in the Miniſtry are actuated. The Century commenced in liberty and it is ending in licentiouſneſs. We are departing from the good old way. We are forgetful that the kingdom of Chriſt is not of this World. It is true, when a wealthy friend is in power, he can make his diſſenting Paſtor Chaplain to an embaſſy, or Secretary to a Prime Miniſter. But a moment's conſideration muſt convince us, that the diſſenting intereſt, at large, will ſuffer from the accidental honors and emoluments of individuals. It will awaken dormant animoſities, and revive the competition and odium between *High Church* and *Low*.

I ſpeak

I ſpeak without reſerve, for I ſpeak from conviction. If ſucceſs attend the application, we are *ruined*—the diſſenting intereſt in this country is *undone*. And even if Heaven, in mercy, defeat the ambitious project, my Brethren in the Miniſtry will have wrought an evil in Iſrael that muſt imbitter reflection to the laſt moments of exiſtence. Againſt a government, under which Proteſtant Diſſenters have been protected for a century, they will have inflamed the minds of their inconſiderate flocks; and where peace and good neighbourhood are now eſtabliſhed, they will have to contend with diſappointment, odium and reproach. Such conduct, I am perſuaded, they would condemn in others, as totally irreconcileable with the dictates of patriotiſm and the precepts of ſcripture.

☞ I am this moment informed, that the States of Brabant have reſolved, that the "HOLY ROMAN CATHOLIC FAITH IS THE ONLY RELIGION TO BE TOLERATED IN THE NETHERLANDS." And alſo, that "NO PRINTER SHALL PRESUME TO PRINT ANY BOOKS TENDING TO INFIDELITY."

I conſider theſe Reſolutions as a providential confirmation of the language of this Addreſs.

1ſt Popery is INTOLERANT. It is manifeſt as the light of day, that whenever and wherever Papiſts have the aſcendency, they are TYRANTS.

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The States of Brabant give the lie direct to all the ſpecious and enſnaring paragraphs with which their brethren in England fill our news papers, and their reſtoration of the authority of the Pope's Nuncio is an argument of FACT, that will confound and ſubvert the falſhoods in the Catholic Petition to Parliament, and demonſtrate that what a man, whom I muſt conſider as a martyr lately ſaid is founded in truth, "Popery is ETERNALLY THE SAME."*

2d. Popery is HOSTILE TO FREEDOM. One of the firſt meaſures of the States, was a RESTRICTION on the PRESS. It is true, to guard the people from *Infidelity* is the *Pretence*; but the protection of *Popery* is the *Motive*. The real aim is to keep the multitude in darkneſs, and to deprive them of the knowledge of thoſe ſalutary doctrines which enable Proteſtants to worſhip the Deity in *ſpirit and in truth*.

I earneſtly entreat my fellow citizens to attend to theſe remarks.—The Popiſh hierarchy is a ſtate diſtinct from the ſovereignty of the realm——It is of no moment to the inhabitants of a convent whether the people be free, or in chains, as to their *temporal* concerns, provided the Prieſthood detain them in ſpiritual bondage——But if the temporal ſovereign endeavour to enlighten the minds

* Alfred's Appeal.

minds of the populace, or profanely violate the property and privileges of the *Church*, the Prieſthood will promote an inſurrection, and ſhake the offender's throne. To this cauſe the Emperor is indebted for the loſs of his Belgic Provinces. And to this cauſe we muſt aſcribe the promptitude of the Clergy to PUNISH the King of France for ſome paſt tranſgreſſions. It is true, they had no conception that the Infidels and Proteſtants in the National Aſſembly would carry the reform into *holy ground*. They now perceive their error, and are ardently deſirous of a COALITION with the the King. But it is *too late*, unleſs the Emperor be ſucceſsful in his attempts to recover the Netherlands. The Imperial armies will then be at the ſervice of his Chriſtian Majeſty; and the ſceptre, united with the Crozier, may be too powerful for a divided aſſembly, a diſaffected army, and a lukewarm people.

Sincerely attached to the intereſts of civil liberty, I ſhall rejoice if, with the preſent century, ſlavery be at an end in every part of Europe, and of the whole Earth. But if freedom raiſe her throne on INFIDELITY—if principles ſuch as Dr. PRIESTLEY's be diſſeminated—I ſhould prefer the profoundeſt darkneſs of ſuperſtition to ſuch a ſtate of ſociety; for it is better to worſhip the bleſſed GOD, who made us, in a ſtock or a ſtone, than not worſhip him at all.

I am

I am loſt in ſurprize at the Scenes before me? Gracious Heaven, a coalition of Catholics and Proteſtant Diſſenters!

Proteſtants and Proteſtant Diſſenters formerly united to dethrone the "*Whore of Babylon.*" but never did I expect to behold a union of Proteſtant Diſſenters with—PAPISTS! it is a ſoleciſm—a monſter—the ſpawn of POPERY and INFIDELITY.

The ſubverſion of the Church of England will give pleaſure, I know, to moſt of my brethren in the miniſtry; but I am perſuaded they tremble at the idea of introducing SUPERSTITION and ATHEISM; yet ſuch will be the final iſſue of their preſent Coalition with Papiſts to obtain an OPEN CONSTITUTION.

BISHOPS

I RECALL to mind, with inexpreſſible pleaſure, the confederacy of Biſhops and Proteſtant Divines, to counteract the deſigns of James the Second. LIBERTY of CONSCIENCE, LIBERALITY of SENTIMENT, and an OPEN CONSTITUTION were then, as at preſent, the jeſuitical topics of declamation.

Had Dr. PRIESTLEY been living at that period, he would have joined the Standard of JAMES, the

the advocate of UNIVERSAL TOLERATION and an OPEN CONSTITUTION. It is an inſult to truth and common ſenſe for ſuch a man to ſtyle himſelf a friend to the REVOLUTION.

To the noble ſtand made by the Patriot Biſhops in the reign of James, we are indebted, in a high degree, for the bleſſings of the REVOLUTION. For the continuance of thoſe bleſſings, we muſt be indebted to the zeal and activity of your lordſhips in the approaching conteſt.

It is my humble opinion that a confederacy of the eſtabliſhed Clergy is indiſpenſibly needful; that meetings ought to be called in every county and Borough in the kingdom; and that a general aſſociation of the friends of the Church of England ſhould be inſtantly formed and promoted. The Diſſenters have ſet the example.

When the Members of Parliament, who have hitherto protected the ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION of the State, but who now appear to be intimidated by the prohibitory reſolutions of Diſſenters, perceive themſelves ſtrongly ſupported, there will be no danger of a Defection.

As Lords of Parliament, I do not adviſe your Lordſhips to purſue any unconſtitutional mode of influence, ſuch as public interference in elections, or an indiſcreet uſe of your temporal authority, but I certainly counſel your Lordſhips to ſend

circular letters to the Clergy of each reſpective Dioceſe.

This meaſure is always legal, on the preſent alarming criſis expedient and laudable. The Church of England is menaced with deſtruction. By every obligation, therefore, of *Gratitude*, for your Honour and Emoluments—of *Conſcience*, as Friends to Virtue and Religion—and of *Duty*, as Patriots, you are bound, my Lords, to apprize ſubordinate Miniſters of the danger to which the eſtabliſhment is expoſed, and to call on them to diſcriminate at the approaching *Renovation* of Parliament between FRIENDS and ENEMIES.

I will not inſiſt on the PERSONAL loſs which your Lordſhips may eventually ſuſtain from the reforming ſyſtems of Infidelity. The motive, in the firſt place, is too mean to be decently aſcribed to your Lordſhips as a rule of conduct; and in the next place, the Temporalities of the Church will ſcarcely be affected during the life of the youngeſt Biſhop on the Bench. And yet, if we reflect how *ſuddenly*, how *effectually* the Church of France has been deſpoiled of her revenues; we ought, perhaps, to conſider the event as not only poſſible but probable; not as remote and uncertain, but as imminent and *unavoidable*. I ſpeak on the ſuppoſition of a Repeal of thoſe Laws which are ſo offenſive to Papiſts and Infidels.

To

To the ſtrong inducements already ſpecified, permit me to add, my Lords, the HAPPINESS of men in the *preſent* life; for many affirm that Dr. Prieſtley is the moſt gloomy, moſt miſerable, and moſt diſſatisfied perſon in exiſtence; he ſometimes wears a face of reſignation in *public*, but he is unable to conceal the perturbation of his mind in *private*: whether he is ſhocked at approaching annihilation, or whether he is but a partial convert to his own ſyſtem I cannot determine, but I perfectly coincide in the purport of the Marquis of Lanſdown's remonſtrance "*Sir*, ſaid his Lordſhip, "ſpeaking to Dr. Prieſtley, *were you ſincerely* "*ſatisfied of the Truth of your Theory, you could* "*not be that wretched, deſponding Man you conſtantly* "*appear to be, when withdrawn from the public* "*eye.*"

When my Diſſenting Brethren leave your Lordſhips at leiſure to review the ſtate of affairs with becoming dignity—for I do not wiſh to ſee you *dragooned* into ſchemes of Reformation—I hope every attention neceſſary will be given to the following ſubjects, which I propoſe with all imaginable deference and reſpect.

TYTHES. As this mode of raiſing ſupplies for the Clergy has been found, by long experience, to be injurious to peace and good neighbourhood, I humbly conceive ſuch a commutation may be eſtabliſhed as will remedy the evil, and make an

honorable proviſion for this learned and uſeful deſcription of citizens.

MARRIAGES. The ceremonies of the eſtabliſhment being repugnant to the principles of Diſſenters, might not Sectaries be indulged with leave to ſolemnize the union at their own places of worſhip, and in what form they may judge moſt agreeable to reaſon and ſcripture?

SACRAMENTAL TEST. I am confident your Lordſhips will coincide in opinion, that the Sacramental Teſt is an awful perverſion of Holy things to a moſt unholy purpoſe.

Are there not ten thouſand ways of aſcertaining allegiance to the Church of England, without compelling a Lord ——, or a Mr. ——, to inſult the Deity, and *eat and drink his own condemnation?* Are the pearls of the goſpel to be thrown before ſwine? How impious for an hardened offender, a profeſſed debauchee to addreſs the Almighty in terms like theſe—*I acknowledge and bewail my manifold ſins and wickedneſs, I do* EARNESTLY REPENT, *and am* HEARTILY SORRY *for my miſdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous; the burden intolerable!*

PRAYERS. For the eaſe and edification of thoſe, who attend the eſtabliſhment, I think an abridgment of the form of Prayer highly expedient.

I perfectly

I perfectly agree with a noble Lord* that *Prayer muſt ariſe from the Heart, and is beſt performed in Secret.* But when his Lordſhip thence infers the inutility of Public Worſhip, I diſſent from his inference *toto cælo.* We are cautioned not to *forſake the aſſembling of ourſelves together.* The grand object of a public aſſembly is INSTRUCTION. The Scriptures are to be expounded—moral precepts inculcated—and civil duties enforced. But PRAYER does not appear to be conducive to INSTRUCTION. A conciſe Addreſs to the Deity, comprized under the heads, INVOCATION, ADORATION, and PETITION—with a Prayer for the Commonwealth of Mankind, and for thoſe who are in Authority, ſeem to be all that is needful. When the attention of an Audience has been fatigued by an unneceſſary tautology of Prayer, the mind is little diſpoſed to liſten to the Sermon—the moſt important part of Public Service. But this, and every other hint, I ſubmit, with becoming reſpect, to your Lordſhips' temperate and ſerious conſideration.

ANTIENT PENAL STATUTES. Judge Blackſtone remarks, that our anceſtors paſſed many laws, the Reaſon and Utility of which are by no means OBVIOUS, yet experience has always juſtified the wiſdom of ſuch Laws, for when abrogated, *inconvenience always enſues.*

And

* Lord Stanhope.

honorable proviſion for this learned and uſeful deſcription of citizens.

MARRIAGES. The ceremonies of the eſtabliſhment being repugnant to the principles of Diſſenters, might not Sectaries be indulged with leave to ſolemnize the union at their own places of worſhip, and in what form they may judge moſt agreeable to reaſon and ſcripture?

SACRAMENTAL TEST. I am confident your Lordſhips will coincide in opinion, that the Sacramental Teſt is an awful perverſion of Holy things to a moſt unholy purpoſe.

Are there not ten thouſand ways of aſcertaining allegiance to the Church of England, without compelling a Lord ——, or a Mr. ——, to inſult the Deity, and *eat and drink his own condemnation?* Are the pearls of the goſpel to be thrown before ſwine? How impious for an hardened offender, a profeſſed debauchee to addreſs the Almighty in terms like theſe—*I acknowledge and bewail my manifold ſins and wickedneſs, I do* EARNESTLY REPENT, *and am* HEARTILY SORRY *for my miſdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous; the burden intolerable!*

PRAYERS. For the eaſe and edification of thoſe, who attend the eſtabliſhment, I think an abridgment of the form of Prayer highly expedient.

I perfectly

I perfectly agree with a noble Lord* that *Prayer muſt ariſe from the Heart. and is beſt performed in Secret.* But when his Lordſhip thence infers the inutility of Public Worſhip, I diſſent from his inference *toto cælo.* We are cautioned not to *forſake the aſſembling of ourſelves together.* The grand object of a public aſſembly is INSTRUCTION. The Scriptures are to be expounded—moral precepts inculcated—and civil duties enforced. But PRAYER does not appear to be conducive to INSTRUCTION. A conciſe Addreſs to the Deity, comprized under the heads, INVOCATION, ADORATION, and PETITION—with a Prayer for the Commonwealth of Mankind, and for thoſe who are in Authority, ſeem to be all that is needful. When the attention of an Audience has been fatigued by an unneceſſary tautology of Prayer, the mind is little diſpoſed to liſten to the Sermon—the moſt important part of Public Service. But this, and every other hint, I ſubmit, with becoming reſpect, to your Lordſhips' temperate and ſerious conſideration.

ANTIENT PENAL STATUTES. Judge Blackſtone remarks, that our anceſtors paſſed many laws, the Reaſon and Utility of which are by no means OBVIOUS, yet experience has always juſtified the wiſdom of ſuch Laws, for when abrogated, *inconvenience always enſues.*

And

* Lord Stanhope.

And this argument I adopt in oppoſition to the Project of SAMPSON the Noble, who is ſo anxious to throw down the Fences by Law eſtabliſhed, and to lay waſte the ancient provinces of the Church of England with FOXES and FIRE-BRANDS.

Proteſtant and Catholic Diſſenters are doubtleſs under the higheſt obligations to Earl Stanhope for his charitable Intentions, but to detect the Fallacy of his Reaſoning, I will ſelect only one of thoſe Laws which his Lordſhip deſires to abrogate. It relates to WITCHCRAFT. The noble Lord conceives this Statute to be a Proof of the Ignorance and Superſtition of the Parliament who enacted it, and a reproach to the "enlightened" age which ſuffers it to remain in force. But I requeſt his Lordſhip to conſider that our anceſtors enjoyed as great a ſhare of Common Senſe as ourſelves; nor does it by any means follow that they believed in the FACT when they provided a Remedy againſt the PROFESSION.

Thus, for inſtance, we have Laws of Modern Date againſt FORTUNE TELLING, but I dare affirm, that every Prelate on the Bench, and every Member of Parliament who aſſiſted in paſſing that Law, is firmly perſuaded that the Preſcience of future events is the ſole Prerogative of that awful Being who inhabits Eternity; at the ſame time they were convinced that the PROFESSION of ſuch knowledge

knowledge is ſo common, that a Law was neceſſary to puniſh the Offenders. Innumerable inſtances have occurred of Individuals made wretched, and Families ruined by the Agency of ſuch Miſcreants.

Now let it be ſuppoſed that the Terrors of the Law totally extirpate the Practice—and ſuppoſe, in a future age, ſome noble Reformer ſhould adduce this Law in Proof of the Ignorance and Barbariſm of the 18th Century, would the Imputation be juſt? No. If the Law were repealed, ſwarms of Profeſſors would ſtart up in every part of the Realm.

And thus with the penal ſtatute againſt WITCHCRAFT. Let the law be abrogated, and POPERY encouraged, and I pledge my life that WITCHES and WIZARDS will again abound in every Town and Village in the kingdom. Popery is the parent of SUPERSTITION. The Miracles and Legends of the Saints have a direct tendency to prepare the minds of the multitude for WITCHCRAFT, FORTUNE TELLING, and every abſurdity under Heaven.

If there be no preſent pretenders to ſorcery, or the black art, the law cannot be enforced, but a dormant law is innocuous, and conſequently no evil. The time *may* arrive when it may be again uſeful. And this reaſoning is deciſive againſt the abrogation of all ancient penal ſtatutes,

and

and I humbly adviſe your Lordſhips to be cautious in aſſenting to their abrogation.

TO conclude, I hope your Lordſhips will be faithful. The Diſſenters of Scotland are bound, by the *ſolemn league and covenant*, to ſubvert PRELACY as well as Popery. "Catholic and Proteſtant Diſſenters" are urged by *inclination* to ſubvert the Prelacy of England.

Your Lordſhips muſt be vigilant, active, and unanimous. No temporizing—no palliatives—no mean and unworthy conceſſions to power and greatneſs. Suffer me to remind your Lordſhips of the decided and glorious conduct of Dr. Kenn, Dean of Wells. "When Charles II. paſſed through that town, NELL GWYN who was in the King's ſuite, went to the Dean's houſe to reſide there during her continuance at Wells; the good Doctor, however, refuſed her admittance, and declared boldly—No King's HARLOT ſhould enter there—The King, far from reſenting this laudable conduct in a *Chriſtian* Divine, ſhortly after promoted him to a Biſhoprick." *Query*, what would the good Doctor have ſaid had NELL GWYN been a PAPIST? Have the preſent Dignitaries of the Church of England an equal ſhare of Fortitude and Virtue? *Sat Verbum Sapientibus.*

TEMPORAL

TEMPORAL PEERS.

IT is foreign to the purpoſe of this Addreſs to inveſtigate the origin of Titles, or to aſcertain their influence on human happineſs; perhaps, were they PERSONAL and not HEREDITARY, it would be as well; and perhaps, had they never been deviſed it would be ſtill better; but in the preſent ſtate of things, your Lordſhips will agree with me, that the Peerage of England, as it forms ſo important a part of the Conſtitution, cannot be aboliſhed without inconvenience and hazards.

It reſts with your Lordſhips to determine, from the evidence of Hiſtory, how far DISSENTERS were *formerly* friendly to the HOUSE of PEERS.

Are they more liberal in this "enlightened" age? Look to America, my Lords, where TITLES are deemed an abomination.

Look to France, my Lords, and ſurvey the effects of thoſe LEVELLING principles which are ſo intimately connected with an OPEN CONSTITUTION.

If your Lordſhips deſire to be degraded, inſulted, and deſpiſed, vote for the Repeal of thoſe

Laws which your anceſtors enacted for your preſervation. But if your Lordſhips are ambitious of paſſing through life with honour, and of tranſmiting your dignities undiminiſhed to poſterity, repel, with a noble diſdain, this attack on the barriers of the Conſtitution, nor ſacrifice to a PARTY the Intereſt of your Country, and the Splendour of your Rank.

F I N I S.

POSTCRIPT

POSTSCRIPT.

IF any one imagine the Diſſentersare not in earneſt in this buſineſs, I beg leave to appeal to the Reſolutions paſſed at Leiceſter—a Fund is propoſed — Delegates are choſen — a regular ſyſtem of co-operation eſtabliſhed—and the "NATIONAL MEETING," as they ſtyle Parliament, is to be taken by ſtorm!!! *Qui vult decipi, decipiatur.*

And if any one be diſpoſed to cenſure my treatment of Dr. Prieſtley as unmerited, and to conclude, from the pompous and triumphant manner in which he defies the Bench of Biſhops to ſupport the Doctrine of the ſacred Trinity, that his arguments are irreſiſtible, I requeſt leave to add, that the Doctor's "ELUCIDATIONS" of important Paſſages of Scripture are uſually diſengenuous and often ABSURD.

The Divinity of the Meſſiah is a COMMON CAUSE, Diſſenters are as much intereſted as the eſtabliſhed Clergy, and though it be painful for a man advanced in years to enter the field of controverſy, I pledge myſelf to meet Dr. Prieſtley on the ground of *Revelation* whenever he pleaſes.

As to the opinions of Synods and Councils, they are not *my* concern. What the old Fathers or the old Mothers of the Popiſh Church have written

written on the ſubject is, with me, lighter than vanity. The Doctrine *is to be found in the Bible*, or *it is not*.

With the HEBREW Teſtament, therefore, containing the Prophecies of the Meſſiah—and with the GREEK Teſtament, containing the Fulfilment, of thoſe Prophecies, I am prepared for the conteſt; nor do I ſee how Dr. Prieſtley can decline the invitation.

January, 1790.

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